
INCLUSIVE!

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ELEMENTARY INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION PROGRAM
TEACHERS COLLEGE,
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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A Message For You!

Dear Reader,

With great joy and enthusiasm, we bring you the latest edition of our newsletter for the Elementary Inclusive Education Program. In this issue, we celebrate our students' remarkable progress and achievements. Each day, we witness their growth, resilience, and boundless potential. They inspire us to create an environment where every child feels valued, supported, and empowered to thrive.

We encourage you to explore the articles, success stories, and interviews that highlight the transformative power of inclusive education. Let these stories inspire you, spark conversations, and ignite your passion for creating an inclusive and equitable world for all.

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Student Spotlight

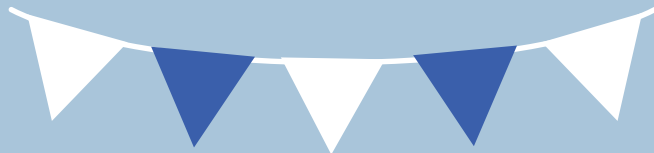
Carmen Lu

Kelly Newton

Nayeli Pena

Amanda Pesonen

Sabrina Pirzada





CARMEN LU



Hometown: I'm a New York native born and raised in Brooklyn!

Graduation Date: Spring of 2023.

If you could pass on any wisdom to your students, what would you share?

I would share how much empathy makes the world go round. Not only does it help with our classroom communities to approach your classmates with an open heart and mind, it is important to extend it to everyday people as well. We can all learn so much from those who are different from us and learning about their own experiences, struggles, and joys make our community a better place.



How do you feel on the Chihuahua scale?

Your students admire you. How do you make those connections?

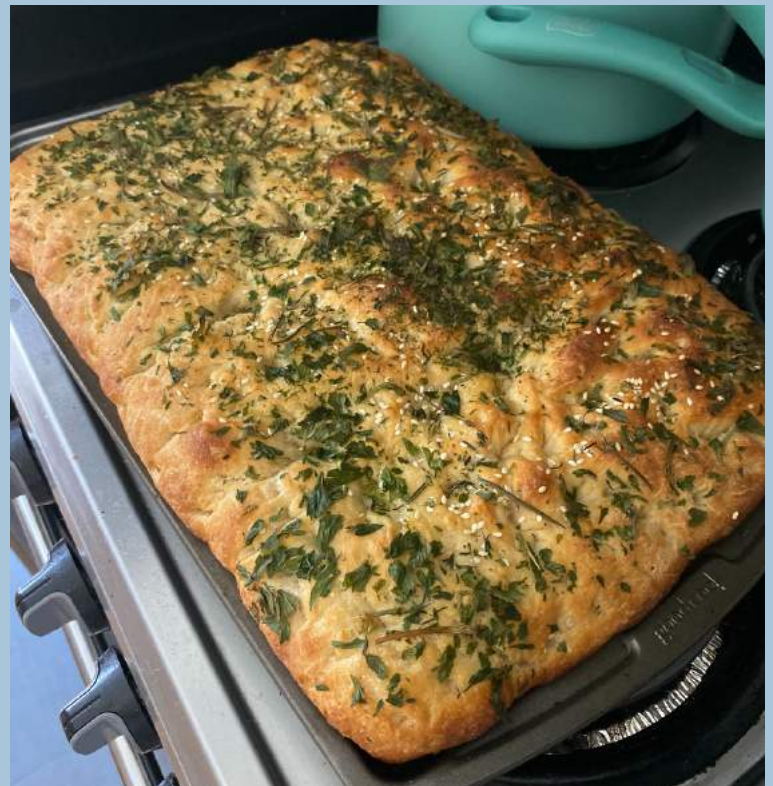
I actively try to engage with what my students are interested in! Sometimes we have the same type of humor, with the amount of memes and exposure to the same types of media, we bond in that sense. I feel as this builds our initial connections that just evolve into trust and understanding of each other as individuals.

What inspires you?

The students really inspire me, they all have their own unique view of the world around them and fostering that imagination and curiosity is what I love to do as an educator!

What is your favorite dish to make?

It is not my ultimate favorite, but I have been on a focaccia binge as of lately! It is just so easy to make without much kneading necessary!





KELLY NEWTON

Hometown: Mansfield, Massachusetts

Graduation Date: May 2023

What led you to this career?

My parents are both teachers, so it's always been on my radar as something I might be interested in. I ended up pursuing other things in college, but following graduation, I went abroad to teach in Central Asia for a few years. I became very close with my group of 5th graders, and it was heartbreaking to say goodbye to them at the end. Seeing how transformative a loving classroom community can be for children led me to want to be a part of a program like Elementary Inclusive Education.



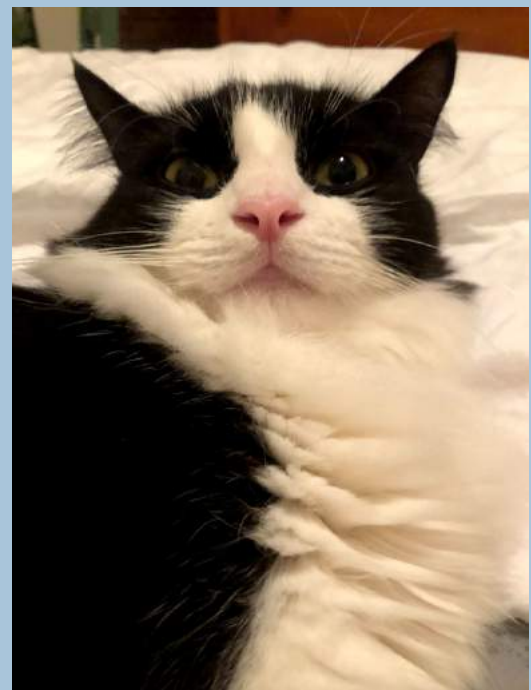
What's a work-related accomplishment that you're really proud of?

At my student teaching placement this semester, there was a student in my class who was having a lot of academic, social, and emotional struggles. I worked hard to build a really strong relationship with her right off the bat, and I saw how positively she responded to knowing that someone cared about her as a whole person. Her engagement, academics, and friendships in the class have really improved, and I think that's in small part to knowing I am there for her.



What is your favorite hobby and/or interest and why is it special to you?

I love hanging with my cat! She's a silly (and slightly mean) little girl that I adopted when I first moved to NYC.



What's your favorite television show or movie? What do you love about it?

My favorite show is (embarrassingly) the Bachelor/Bachelorette. I mostly love it because I have friends in different parts of the country who watch it, so it becomes a social event.



NAYELI PENA

What have you learned from TC courses?

From the start of my journey at TC, I have gained so much knowledge in different areas. However, the two concepts that have made the biggest impact in my learning thus far have been anti-ableism and anti-racism. I have learned about the harm of ableist language in our society and how we can replace ableist words with language that does not devalue people's disability. I have also learned about what it means to be an antiracist and how to implement antiracist pedagogy into curriculum. Antiracist education goes beyond recognizing the experiences of those that have been historically, socially, and physically oppressed in our society. It instead focuses on taking action against these different forms of oppression.

What's the best advice you've been given about teaching?

It is okay to make mistakes while teaching. In fact, no lesson will ever be perfect. You're going to mispronounce students' names, you're going to forget to print out worksheets once in a while, and you may unintentionally tell students wrong information. However, you must always address these things because students need to see that adults make mistakes too and that making mistakes is part of life.



Hometown/neighborhood: Bronx/Highbridge

Graduation date: May 2023

What would the students be surprised to find out about you?

Students would be surprised to find out that I can't swallow pills, I am not a movie person, and I do not like mayonnaise.

How do you prefer to start your day?

I prefer to start the day at school with a warm morning meeting where everyone in the classroom shares how they are feeling and what they look forward to in the day, followed by a 5 minute deep breathing exercise.





AMANDA PESONEN



Hometown: Houston, Texas

Graduation: May 2024

How do you plan to address issues related to equity, diversity, and inclusion in your teaching practice?

The opportunity to build learning environments characterized by equity, diversity, and inclusion was one of my primary motivations for going into education, and for choosing TC in particular. I sincerely believe education is the foundation for social justice, and I am committed to making sure all of my students leave my classroom knowing they are competent and capable, they can identify injustice and inequity and work to make their world better, and they are part of a school community where they are loved and supported. In my student teaching this semester, I've been able to teach a female student of color with an interest in science about Dr. Mamie Phipps Clark, whose scientific research contributed to the Brown v. Board of Education decision. I've led my class in discussion about the dangers of book burning and how it disempowers communities by suppressing their voices and ideas. From helping all students see themselves in the curriculum - in the books we read, in the topics we study, in student-directed activities that give them the freedom to explore what they want to learn about - to building relationships with students that begin with knowing them as whole people with their own unique identities, each of my students will know that they belong in my classroom and their voice is an important part of everyone's learning experience.



How do you plan to integrate experiential learning opportunities into your teaching practice?

I want my students to understand that learning doesn't just happen inside a classroom, and we can foster curiosity by seeking learning opportunities as we engage with our communities. When I was a child, I had multiple opportunities to learn by teaching others: in first grade, we practiced reading books to kindergarten students, and in high school, I enjoyed working with elementary students on their math and literacy skills. As a teacher, I would like to see my own students engaging in these kinds of learn-by-teaching activities in which they can help younger students learn something new, sharpen their own understanding of the material, and practice building mentoring relationships. As for field trips, New York City is the quintessential setting for experiential learning! I've been exploring the museums myself since I moved here - The Morgan Library & Museum is a personal favorite - and I'm in awe of all the ways students can go out into the city to see and experience the things they're learning about in school.

How do you plan to incorporate student voice and choice into your teaching practice?

I'm learning so much at TC about giving students the freedom to show me what they know in the best way they know how. I love the idea of letting students choose their modalities - do they want to express themselves in writing? In pictures? Orally? In a language other than English...? Wherever feasible, I think it's so important for students to understand that their knowledge is more than what they can remember during a multiple-choice test. When students can set their own goals and direct their own learning, I believe they are more likely to engage more eagerly with material and produce work that makes them proud.

What is your favorite hobby?

I love live music, so I go to concerts (and while I'm in NYC, Broadway shows!) as often as I can. A few months before I knew I was coming to TC, my partner and I took a vacation to New York to see Bruce Springsteen on Broadway - and that show turned out to be an amazing kickoff to our NYC adventure!





SABRINA PIRZADA

Hometown: Queens, NY

Graduation: May 2023

What inspired you to pursue a career in teaching?

From a young age, I've always been intrigued by the positive long-lasting effects a teacher can have on their students. Since high school, I found myself always looking for jobs where I can work with and teach students. I thoroughly enjoyed my jobs as a camp counselor and teacher's assistant. I loved being able to build relationships with all the students I worked with which inspired me to pursue a career in teaching. I hope to make a difference in the lives of my future students by inspiring and empowering them to pursue their dreams.



What challenges do you anticipate facing as a new teacher, and how do you plan to address them?

As a current substitute teacher, my biggest challenge is classroom management. It can often be difficult to establish authority while also trying to create a positive learning environment. I am still learning to navigate different ways to establish classroom management. The other challenge I anticipate is time management and getting accustomed to a new routine. I hope that I am able to create a routine that works for me and I definitely plan to seek support from mentors and colleagues if needed.



What are some of the most valuable skills and knowledge you have gained from TC?

One thing that has constantly been emphasized in our preservice teacher education program is the importance of community building. Before I can really start teaching my students, it is imperative that I build relationships with my students. Not only that, but I want my classroom to be a safe and welcoming space for all students and this education program has provided me with a plethora of ways that I can achieve that in my future classroom. Another thing this program has really prepared me for is teaching students with many different needs and learning styles. I have gained valuable skills that I hope to utilize in my classroom to make sure I tailor instruction to individualized needs.



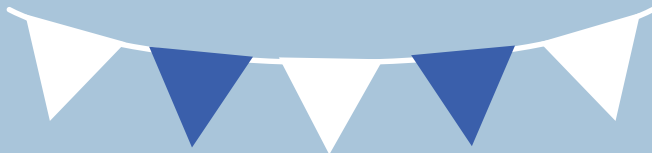
How do you plan to continue your professional development as a teacher after completing the program?

As a future teacher, continuing professional development is essential to keep up with the latest practices in education. I plan to attend workshops and conferences that will help me grow as an educator. Long-term, I hope to go into administration or curriculum development.



Alumni Spotlight

Grace Chang
Erica Rubin





GRACE CHANG

Hometown: New York!

Program Completion Date: May 1997!

Current Position: Gen Ed teacher in 2/3 grades ICT classroom at The Neighborhood School in the East Village, NYC.

How do you spend your summer breaks?

I travel when I can. Since my parents retired to the west coast seven years ago, I try to go see them in Southern California for a week or two in the summer time. My sister started living in Sydney, Australia seven years ago and I have visited her a few times during summer breaks. For the past several summers, I've spent a couple of weeks hanging out with friends who live on a lake in central Maine. We eat lobsters and clams, go wild blueberry picking, make cobblers and jam. Last year I was introduced to antiquing! I love imagining the stories behind the pieces I'm looking at. Still, I'm looking forward to traveling to new places again—Morocco and Portugal are high on my list. When I'm not traveling, I cook and bake for friends, take drives and explore little towns, try my hand at



growing flowers and vegetables, go farm hopping, can fruit that I pick. I like to walk in the woods and I fantasize about foraging. But really, I'm no good at it yet.

The last couple years have made me think a lot about the passing of time, and mostly, I just try to be present in whatever I'm doing, even if it's just sitting on a couch and staring out the window.

What are your “trapped on a desert island” books or movies?

I sometimes binge watch tv shows from my childhood like Little House on the Prairie and I Love Lucy...I know they're dated and at times problematic. But they're nostalgic. I just skip through the episodes I don't love. I've been known to rewatch Downton Abbey, Band of Brothers, Sex and the City, Friends. I think I'd like to rewatch the whole This is Us series. So sad it's over. Truth be told, I love reading cookbooks and memoirs. Once I was actually on an island and I read Amanda Hesser's Cooking for Mr. Latte—part memoir and part cookbook.





GRACE CHANG



They learned how to take care of farm animals, milk cows, collect chicken eggs, make outdoor shelters, weave with yarn from the sheep, make maple syrup, and they bonded with each other in a way they could not have done in the physical classroom.

It was an unforgettable experience for each child. We did this trip each year since then and it became something that incoming students looked forward to! Then the lockdown happened, literally two days after we returned from our trip. We haven't taken the trip in a couple of years because of the pandemic but I'm hoping to take them again someday soon. I feel that making this happen for our students has been a highlight of my career and I wish I could've done it sooner.

I love to read the stories of people's childhood or about family dynamics like Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*, and Michelle Zauner's *Crying in H Mart*. I'll read or watch anything that will transport me in place or time, or both!

What accomplishment fills you with pride so far in your career?

A few years ago I organized an overnight trip for the students in our grade to spend time on a working farm. It started as a fantasy that I happened to blurt out loud one day to my colleagues and our school librarian connected me to an amazing organization that provided this kind of experience for children. With the support of our principal and our PTA executive board at the time, we fundraised and brought our urban children to rural upstate New York where they literally ran free and learned about where food comes from.





ERICA RUBIN

What makes a 'good day' at school?



Hometown: Woodmere, New York

Program Completion Date: December 2017

Current Position: 5th Grade ICT Teacher

In your opinion, what's the best part of teaching?

In my opinion, the best part of teaching is creating and learning alongside my students. The best part of any day is watching a student discover something new and witness their excitement towards their learning. There is nothing better than a student eagerly sharing with a peer, "Did you know..!"

What is one of your hidden talents?

One of my hidden talents is finding a reason to smile and laugh with my students, even on the most challenging days.

A 'good day' at school is a day that extends beyond the four walls of the classroom. These are days when students are exploring the neighborhood or the city outside of the school building, playing or creating with other students across the school building, and so much more. These are the days, and the moments, that students can learn more about themselves, their strengths, and their interests.



Who has influenced you most when it comes to how you approach your work?

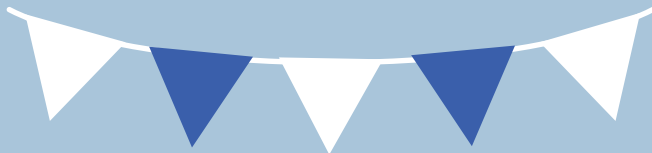
My colleagues have influenced me the most when it comes to how I approach my work. Each day brings about new challenges, and I am grateful to have colleagues to learn alongside, seek advice from, and problem-solve with to continuously strengthen my work.





Field Placement Spotlight

P.S. 15 - Patrick F. Daly
School





P.S. 15 - PATRICK F. DALY SCHOOL

How do you foster a positive and inclusive school culture?

At PS 15, we embrace and celebrate inclusion as our superpower! Our school community is incredibly diverse in every aspect, spanning across demographics. We take pride in our Spanish Dual Language Program and are excited to announce the addition of Spanish Dual ICT in Kindergarten and 1st grade next year. In partnership with the Office of Special Programs, we established the ACES ACCESS ICT program, which serves children with intellectual and multiple disabilities. Approximately 40% of our students have individualized education plans.

Our school mantra, "Magic and Joy," permeates throughout the hallways, creating a vibrant atmosphere where everyone is focused on the well-being and growth of our students while prioritizing access, equity, identity, and social-emotional responsiveness.

To bring some laughter and joy to our office, I recently surprised our secretary with a screaming goat button. Last year, she welcomed a turtle named Jack and a few fish into our office. While the office can be stressful, we find moments of light-heartedness and connection through silly goat sounds and visits from our beloved turtle, Jack, and the surviving pandemic fish, Patrick, throughout the day. At times, we may encounter days filled with unicorns and rainbows, while on other days, we may be greeted by screaming goats. It's important to acknowledge that perfection is unrealistic, especially within a school setting. However, as long as we continue to learn, laugh, and support one another, we are making a positive impact.

How do you involve your school's parents, families, and community members?

PS 15 is renowned for its warm and loving atmosphere, often referred to as a close-knit family by those who experience our school community. As a Beacon School, we are privileged to have Good Shepherd as our partner, offering programs that extend into the evening. In addition, we have valuable partnerships with NYU, which provides on-site medical, dental, and mental health clinics. Our collaboration with Red Hook Initiative and membership in the Red Hook Health Coalition further enhance our connections within the local community as we eagerly await the upcoming addition of a full-service NYU clinic.

Maintaining open lines of communication with families is a priority for our staff. We actively invite feedback, ideas, and suggestions and provide various platforms for engagement, such as monthly School-to-Home advocacy sessions like "Donuts with Grownups," Cookshop, Equity Team, PTA, SLT (School Leadership Team), and our CEP (Community Education Council) subcommittee, among others.

At the core of our approach is a Healing Justice Framework, which underpins the relationships we cultivate with families and the wider community.

Through reflection and continuous questioning, we actively seek ways to support, add value, engage, welcome, ensure access, empower, and liberate our families. Recognizing that families are our partners in fostering the holistic well-being of every child, we believe their inclusion in every aspect of the liberation journey is paramount.



Integrating, embedding, and normalizing Critical consciousness has been a focus of our intentional work. Student led initiatives like this Valentines Fundraiser for a sister school in Puerto Rico and the K&5 Climate Justice March. Our students deepen their understanding of charity vs solidarity and use the power of their voice and action to positively impact their community and world.





P.S. 15 - PATRICK F. DALY SCHOOL

What inspired you to become an educator, and how did you become a principal?

As I entered college, my initial plan was to become a journalist, but my natural inclination toward teaching led me to gravitate toward the education field. This decision was influenced by my High School Principal, Dr. Foreman, who, before I graduated, encouraged me to consider becoming a teacher and even a principal someday. In my freshman year of college, I consciously chose to enter the school of education, driven by my desire to pay forward the incredible impact that educators had on my life. Along the way, I had the guidance and mentorship of remarkable individuals like Ms. Leonard, a former PS 15 principal who encouraged me to obtain my school building leader license, and Ms. Wyns-Madison, my predecessor and mentor at PS 15. Now, as a 17-year veteran special education teacher, a four-year AP, and currently serving as a principal for two and a half years, I find myself following the path that unfolded before me. Teaching and leading in education feel like my true calling. I strive to embody what Dr. Foreman was to me in my community: a principal who truly sees and individualizes support for children, families, and staff members.



Inclusion is our superpower! This image captures the moment one of our ACES ACCESS students accomplished a goal in their hockey unit, independently, demonstrating the skill for the first time and scoring the winning goal for their team. A celebration ensued!

What advice would you give aspiring educators looking to make a difference in their schools?

I truly believe that schools are the vehicle to change the world! The work is not easy. From my perspective impactful educators and school leaders care deeply about children and their well being and success, they are committed to continuous improvement and are grounded in, and/or committed to, DEI frameworks. They see themselves as intellectuals and read and engage in and with research.

Being an educator requires the ability to emotion coach, to parent, to listen, to teach, to learn. Being a part of a school community requires us to take and implement feedback, to admit when we are wrong, to communicate peacefully, to repair harm, to analyze data and specially design instruction, to support, and to bear the burden of upstream challenges while everyone seemingly has their eyes fixed downstream. We must do all of this while maintaining an asset minded approach and progress forward.

So, if that all sounds like something you are up for (and I promise you, as hard as it all is, I cannot believe what I "get" to do everyday! I am a principal, Dr. Foreman!), then my advice is find a school community that aligns with your values, that opens a space for your creativity and commitment, and values all members of the community. Or via an Equity Team or other formalized structure, introduce and move forward a vision for transformative change, lead for liberation with love.

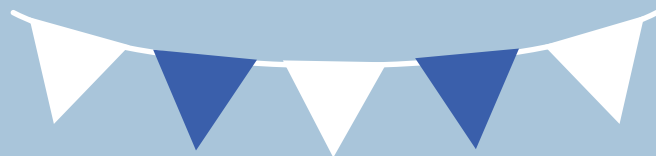


Character Day at PS 15! I was Sally Ride and Rex was the Principal (walkie Talkie on point!)



Field Supervisor Spotlight

Annabell Burrell
Jennifer Sherwood





ANNABELL BURRELL



Tell us a little bit about your background and the roles you played in the educational system?

It is rare to know your talents and gifts at an early age. First grade was a magical year for me, since I never attended kindergarten. Ms. Nelson was my hero. I learned to read, count, and make friends. I was the classic 'teacher's pet'. Sharpening pencils for the teacher and helping to clean up the classroom at the end of the day was pure joy. I loved school and school loved me back. I became a bilingual classroom teacher in 1990 to an amazing class of 22 first graders. 11 boys, 11 girls, and a set of identical twins. The stars were aligned in my favor. I loved first grade and then learned to love kindergarten, second and third grade, too.

Transitioning from a classroom teacher to a staff development position was not hard. Classroom work was still in my blood and I relished in working and collaborating with my colleagues. I learned about adults and the ways they learned while still navigating my professional relationships. If you are wondering if working with adults is easy, it is not. Working with adults can sometimes be as challenging as working with children, but they are both equally rewarding.

After four years as a staff developer and dual language coordinator, I was accepted into the NYC Leadership Academy. After graduation, I immediately was tapped for a middle school assistant principal vacancy. Middle school, you say? Yes, middle school. What an adventure. One of the best experiences about this job was that as a

6th grade AP, I already knew the fifth graders from the feeder school my first year. The families knew who I was and that made the transition easier for them and their youngsters. The leadership of a school came in 2005. It was unexpected, but came at a time when I was ready to implement a vision of my own. The school community was welcoming and diverse. The teachers were smart, the kids were sweet and the families, active and engaged in school. This was the perfect match. No one leads a school alone. The support network that surrounded me were teachers and parents with genuine interest in seeing all our students succeed. For this, I was truly grateful. Collectively, we were able to accomplish what some considered impossible. We were small, but we were mighty.

Teachers College became a part of my professional experience in 2019 as a clinical field supervisor in the Elementary Inclusive Program. Since then, I have had the privilege of supporting and learning from 18 teacher candidates. The diversity in background experience and knowledge is one that I appreciate and celebrate. My belief is that the most important work is about teachers, students and their families. Everything we do must center on this. Our work is not about what we do now to make the present better, but about what we do now to make the future better for children.

How would you describe your role as a field supervisor?

As a field supervisor, my support for teacher candidates is two-fold. One is to advise as it pertains to teaching pedagogy and the other to help candidates grow and apply their own gifts to the work of educating children. My hope is that they do the same for their students. We must teach skills, strategies and large concepts, but we must also find the gift and talent in each student and grow that as well. It is important to find joy in this work and one way to do this is to find how you can apply your own talents and gifts.

Is there a quote or saying that you live your life by?

We must prepare children to learn, grow and thrive, not in the world as it is, but in the world they will inherit.



JENNIFER SHERWOOD

Tell us a little bit about yourself and what led you to the educational field?

It took several years of exploring other career fields for me to find my way into teaching. I always had an interest in working with children, particularly when I had an opportunity to engage with them in the learning process. It was a mix of personal, educational, volunteer, and professional experiences that made me realize that the work of teaching provided a unique combination of challenge, energy, connection, collaboration, and the chance to accomplish something meaningful on both an individual and systemic level. I was fortunate to start my career in the Elementary Inclusive Education program at TC. After graduating from the program, I taught at the elementary level for eight years in the NYC DOE. I relocated to Austin with my family in late 2019. The shift to virtual learning afforded me an unexpected opportunity to reconnect with the program as a supervisor from my new home in Texas starting in the fall of 2020.

What is most rewarding about your work with pre-service teachers?

In addition to the strong foundation the pre-service program provided for my career, it also led me to both of the schools at which I taught in NYC and gave me some of my closest friends. Having gained so much from my own time at TC, it is very meaningful to have come full circle and now have the opportunity to be a part of the experience of a new generation of pre-service teachers. My favorite part of the supervision work is problem solving with students, thinking through lesson plans and reflecting on instruction. I'm always amazed by the perspective pre-service teachers bring to their practice and encouraged by their commitment to social justice from the moment they set foot in the classroom. It's also incredible to see how much student teachers grow over the course of a semester.



Even though I am years out from my own student teaching experience, I still feel like I can relate to the intense feelings of the challenges and successes that come with being new to teaching. It is very rewarding to be a part of those moments when pre-service teachers gain confidence and competence in their practice and see them really come into their own as teachers.

What do you see as the biggest challenge teachers will face today?

The impact of the COVID pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for teachers. One result of these challenges is increased teacher burnout. As new teachers enter the field, it's more crucial than ever that they build a support network of peers and mentors and find the people who will keep them energized and engaged. Alongside this, finding ways to bring joy to the forefront of their classrooms and practice is also so important.

If you were to be given a superlative when you were in school, what would it have been?

Well, I guess I was always the "talker" in school, the kid who got in trouble for having side conversations, so it would probably have something to do with that. Being a so-called chatty student myself gave me a special appreciation for those children in my own classroom. As an educator, I've recognized a shift in myself toward talking less and listening more.

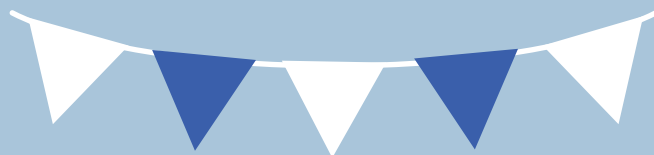


Other Articles

Mentoring Program for Students of Color

CORE: Supporting Students with
Field Experience

Elementary School's Glimpse of College Life
(Re)Imagine Disability



MENTORING PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

We are excited to announce that the Elementary Inclusive Education Program has proudly offered its Mentoring Program for Students of Color for the fourth year. The program aims to connect current students with graduates who can share their valuable experiences and insights.

We are thrilled to hear from two of this year's participants about their positive experiences with the program. Their feedback demonstrates the program's impact on their personal and academic growth.

Here are some comments from the participants:



Kim became Anmei's mentor during the Fall 2020 semester, and they still keep in touch. We were pleased to receive an email from Kim saying, "Did I tell you that Anmei is now working at Chapin with me? She's a first-year associate teacher, and I'm a first-year head teacher. We don't work in the same grade, but we see each other all the time."

"I had an excellent experience with the mentoring program! My mentor - Kim - and I got along extremely well, and she provided me a lot of support and advice that were remarkably helpful to me as I finished my Master's program at TC and started as a first year teacher. We communicated well over the course of our digital correspondence during the pandemic, and we developed a friendship once we were able to meet in person. Our mentoring relationship continued past my graduation, and she gave me helpful pointers for applying to jobs. I had a wonderful time with this mentoring program, and I am so grateful to have gotten to know Kim!" - **Anmei Ni**

"I have been connected to a network of successful and likeminded individuals willing to invest in my success. I appreciate the shared learning experience under the guidance of someone whose been in my shoes and walked straight into achievement. My mentor has provided academic and social-emotional support. She is always available and willing to make time for me. I am extremely grateful for this experience." - **Beruryah Batyehudah**

We are inspired by the impact that this program has had on our students, and we are committed to continuing to provide these mentoring opportunities for years to come. We want to thank all our mentors for their dedication and support, and we encourage our students of color to take advantage of this valuable resource.



"It was so nice to have brunch with Xinting at Clinton Street Baking Company! We enjoyed a delicious brunch together while talking about student teaching placements, why we got into teaching, both our backgrounds, and so many other things. I'm looking forward to our next meeting and I'm excited to grow our relationship." - Sarah Ali

"I had a fantastic time meeting Sarah. She shared her experience in the Elementary Inclusive Education program and offered great insight into her time at the program. Sarah also talked a lot about her placements at various schools during her time at TC and I did so as well. We bonded over our mutual love for brunch as well as for Marshalls while we were waiting for our table." - Xinting Liu



CORE: SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH FIELD EXPERIENCE

For student teachers, nothing beats the experience of being in the classroom, engaging with students, and putting theoretical concepts learned in coursework into practice. However, field experience can be daunting, particularly for those starting their teaching journey.

Student Teaching Method: Inclusive Teaching, better known as CORE, is a course that empowers and supports student teachers as they navigate the complex world of teaching. A team of experienced educators with a wealth of knowledge and expertise teach the course. This semester our team included Professor Britt Hamre, Instructors Maddie Neufeld and La Toya Caton, and clinical faculty Sarah Ali and Amann Ahmad. Their guidance and mentorship help student teachers develop their teaching skills and become effective educators.

This semester, CORE has been fortunate to have several outstanding guests, many of who are program graduates themselves. These experts bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to



the program, providing valuable insights and perspectives on various teaching and education-related topics. Alison Dempsey and Bea Colonia discussed Abolitionist Teaching in Action, providing insight into this powerful orientation to teaching that seeks to dismantle oppressive systems and promote social justice. Matt Amore challenged students to rethink traditional norms and create more inclusive and equitable learning environments with his talk on Disrupting Gender Norms: Beyond the Binary. Finally, Kass and Cornelius Minor provided insight into how educators and schools can work toward racial justice and inclusivity.

The guest lectures have been a valuable addition to the course, providing student teachers with a deeper understanding of crucial issues in education. They also allow students to engage with field experts, ask questions, and seek guidance on specific topics that they find particularly pressing for them in their own beginning practice.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S GLIMPSE OF COLLEGE LIFE



On April 17, 2023, approximately 130 Kindergarten and fifth-grade students from PS 15 in Brooklyn visited Teachers College, Columbia University. This campus visit provided an excellent chance for the students to learn about college life, explore the campus, and engage in activities that helped them think about their future.

The day began with a campus tour led by knowledgeable campus ambassadors who showed the students around the campus. They visited the library, Milbank Chapel, and other notable areas on campus, where they learned about the resources available to students. The students were impressed with the size and beauty of the campus, and they enjoyed seeing the different buildings and learning spaces.

After the campus tour, the students enjoyed a delicious lunch before participating in a hopes and dreams activity. During this activity, students were encouraged to think about what they wanted to be when they grew up, which inspired and guided a discussion about their future goals.

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The students left feeling inspired and motivated to pursue their dreams and work hard towards their goals. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Maria Paula Ghiso and Jacqueline Simmons for their support in facilitating this opportunity, the General Counsel for promptly processing the request for the campus visit, TC Campus Ambassadors from the Admissions Department who led the campus tour, and Public Safety for ensuring seamless transitions of students and teachers entering and leaving campus.

We hope to continue this tradition of campus visits and college exploration in the future as we strive to inspire children to reach for the stars.

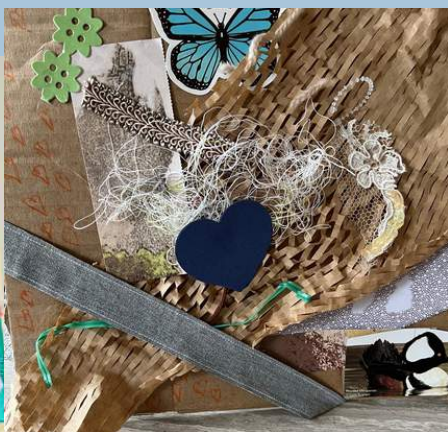
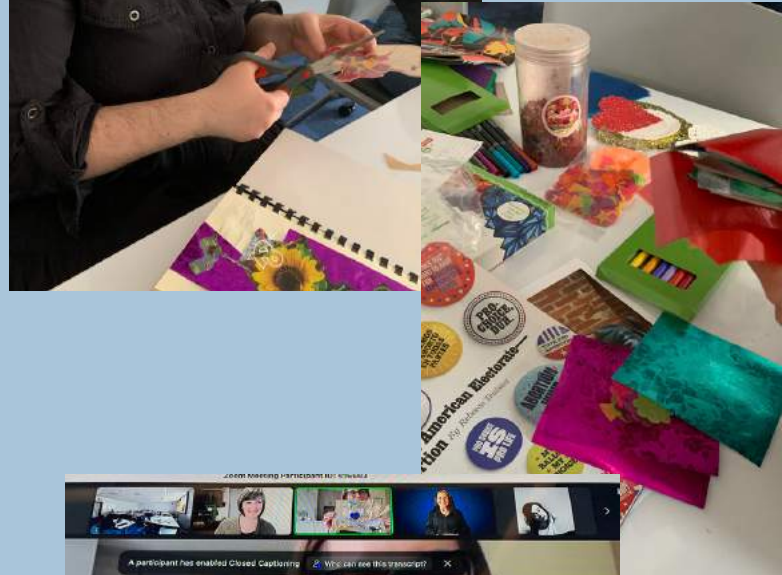


(RE) IMAGINE DISABILITY

We are excited to participate in a student-initiated arts-based series of events titled (Re)imagine Disability. The first workshop in this series, "Collage and Care" was held on March 31. A second followed on May 6. The series was sponsored by the Dept. of Curriculum and Teaching, Office for Diversity and Community Affairs and the Teachers College Barrier Removal Committee, (Re) Imagine Disability. It was a hybrid event, with many participants creating their collages remotely.

During the workshop, participants were invited to imagine care work in relation to disability justice. We were introduced to the principles of disability justice. We learned about crip emotional intelligence and how that informs care work. As we explored these ideas, we began to collage how we are coming to understand crip emotional intelligence. We ended the session with both in-person and online participants sharing their experiences in making the collage.

As a program, we are actively supporting this series, as it urges students, faculty and the larger community to deeply examine the ableist underpinnings of our educational systems and by extension what we mean by accessibility and inclusion.



ELEMENTARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

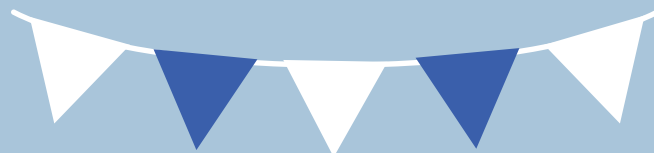
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Program Blog

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/curriculum-and-teaching/elementary-inclusive-education/blog/>

Thank you for reading

INCLUSIVE!



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